162 80-89	0.8	1.2	1.0
90-99	0.0	0.1	0.1

163 The Estonian birth rate has never been high.
• 165 The 1930-34 average was 16.8 per mille. At the same time, the death rate averaged 14.9 per mille, leaving a natural increase of 1.9 per mille. This median death rate was higher than the average among other people with the same birth rate. In earlier years (in the last decade of the nineteenth century, for example) the birth rate of the Estonians has been considerably higher--
[563] 29.9 per mille. The birth rate among the Russian minority was 7 to 8 per cent higher than that for the Estonian population, but the Estonian German and Jewish populations had higher death rates than birth rates.

165 Before Estonian independence the infant

165 mortality rate was extremely high, but during the years of independence it dropped, as a result of the better medical care available for infants and mothers. The death rate dropped also in the age group of 10-19, but it still remained high in the age group of 1-9.

162 563 The overwhelming majority of the population of Estonia in 1934 were Estonian--88.2 per cent, or almost one million people. Until World War II the minorities in Estonia ranked as follows:

Russians	8.2 per cent
Germans	1.5 per cent
Swedes	0.7 per cent
Latvians	0.5 per cent
Others (Jews, etc.)	0.9 per cent

From prehistoric times Estonians have had

161 the Isaijeva Vepsians (295) were not included. Finnish scholars considered the Vepsians' number by the end of the czarist regime to be around 25,000, which, however, may be less than their actual number.

The increase of the Vepsians in the 50-year period from 1848 to 1897 was 63.66 per cent, which is less than the average increase of the whole population of this area. Especially low was the increase in the Novgorod government--29.58 per cent. The increase of the Vepsians in the following 30 years, from 1897 to 1926, was even lower than before--28.2 per cent.

What is the reason for this slow increase of the Vepsians?

Let us examine first their natural increase. It has been widely noticed that the Vepsian [163] families have many children. We have exact [165] data from one community in North Vepse, Sheltozero, which would confirm this statement. In the years 1923 to 1926 the birth-rate in Sheltozero per year was 53.4, while the death-rate for the same period was 35.4. The natural increase in this community thus was 18, which was higher than the average increase of 16 in Karelia.

177 If, despite this considerable natural increase, the number of Vepsians does not show an adequate increase, then the reason for this is to be sought in the russification process. Russification is first of all noticeable in isolated villages, the population of which is